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parishes. The islands form thirty-one of these, and there are about one hundred and thirty-one on the main land, where the *Gaelic* language is either preached or generally spoken. The total population of these is at present estimated at nearly *four hundred thousand*, of which between *ninety and one hundred thousand* inhabit the islands alone. Notwithstanding the various sources of depopulation, it now appears, that the inhabitants of these parts are, in fact, annually on the increase; nay, in the course of the last sixty years, (that is, since 1750,) the population of almost every Highland parish, and every island, has been doubled:

On the main land.

Fearn, out of 1500	1900 are unable to read
Gairloch,.... 2945	2549
Lochbroom, 4000	3300

In the Islands.

Kilmuir, } 3056	2718
Skye, } 4000	2800
Stornoway } 3000	2600
Lewes, } 4000	3800
Harris, } 4000	3800
out of } 4000	3800
North Uist, } 4000	3800
out of } 4000	3800

Thus, out of 22,501,—19,367 are incapable of reading either English or Gaelic. Of the *seventy-eight* inhabited islands above stated, a number are at this day still totally unprovided with the means of instruction."

ORIGINAL POETRY.

THE BANSHEE.

A TALE FOUNDED ON FACTS.

EACH one, by sleep and toil oppress'd,
Had sunk in soft repose;
Save Joan, who sat behind the rest,
To mend her Sunday hose.

A trifling rent, full well she knew,
To greater still would tend;
Besides, she held the maxim true,
"They're always good that mend."

On saving bent, no anarchy
Prevail'd throughout the plan;
Frugality and Industry
With her went hand in hand.

But weary of her darning bout,
She laid aside her thread;
And quickly put the candle out,
And straight withdrew to bed.

The moonshine pale had form'd the room
A variegated scene;
With part bedight in sable gloom,
And part in silvery sheen,

The scene impress'd an awful dread
That moment on her mind;
And fairy fancy fill'd her head
With phantoms undefin'd.

When lo! amid this reverie—
In sable state array'd,
With haggard face, the fell Banshee
Presents her rueful shade!

The lunar-beam her visage shows,
(A border'd cap within;)
A furrow'd cheek, a front rugose,
A painted nose and chin.

But whether it was cloak or plaid,
That from the shoulder fell;
Or only something veil'd in shade,
It pos'd her much to tell.

Appal'd she stood, in dire affright,
And view'd the elfish form;—
Such vision oft at dead of night
Is seen to mount the storm:

And whilst rude Boreas pours around
His frost-diffusing breath,
Is heard, in hollow dismal sound,
To chant the dirge of death!—

So she, in expectation drear,
Beneath the horrid scowl;
From breath to breath awaits to hear,
The death-portending howl!

Yet lamentation ominous
The vision utter'd none;

But silent as her wheel it was,
When spinning task is done.

O! What is courage? say, ye wise,
Who diligently scan,
And critically analyze
The curious mind of man.

From Sire to Son, resides it in
Hereditary blood;
In crimson channel has it been
Meand'ring since the flood.

Or, but transplanted sentiment
Heroic, in the breast;
Or, does it spring from temp'rament,
Internally impress'd.

Or, what is fear, its opposite,
That palsy of the mind;
That intellectual ague-fit,
So hard to be defin'd?

That power, that often binds the brave,
With chains unfelt before;
Who calmly erst has plough'd the wave,
Amid the battle-roar.

Now whether lodg'd in crimson cells,
Or fibres of the brain;
In blood, or nerve, or something else,
I leave you to explain.

And whilst, perhaps, to cause innate
You trace the passion's springs;
And learnedly investigate
These metaphysic things;

Be mine the humble task to tell
Indisputable facts;
How Goody's courage rose and fell,
And how at last she acts.

Awhile she waits, in fitful mood,
With passion-tortur'd breast:
Excited now by fortitude,
Anon, by fear depress'd.

Till, urg'd by frenzy wild, at length,
By mad emotions forc'd;
Collected in her mighty strength,
Resolv'd to know the worst;

Determin'd not to bear suspense,
Nor stand like stupid stock;
She forward darts with violence,
And seiz'd—her FLAXEN-ROCK!!!

The self-deceiving sense of sight
Corrected is by feel;
And, lo, behold! the awful sprite
Is but her SPINNING-WHEEL!!!

M.N.

BELFAST MAG. NO. XLIV.

SELECTED POETRY.

NIGHT IN LIVERPOOL.

A FRAGMENT.

THE great torch-bearer to the gods, Sir
Sol,
His light hath put away; and Cynthia now
Holds forth her farthing candle to the
world.

Each little fly that sticks on ceiling-top
Hath said his prayers, and hies him fast to
sleep
Now hath the busy hand of brown-fac'd
toil

Resign'd its task; no more the streets are
throng'd

With groups grotesque, the slaves of pride
and show,

No more, in sweet harmonious yells and
howls,

The sea-nymphs, fish-fags hight, annoy
the ear

Of passengers, with cry of salmon, shrimps,
Of herrings fresh, or strength-restoring
oysters.

'Tis now the hour that aged females part,
Who early in the eve have met to spend
The time in scandal, tea, and loo. Each
dame,

With innate pride and consequence elate,
Scarce deigns at meeting to bestow a word;
But let the tongue-relaxing tea appear—
Instant unbrac'd is every gossip's clack,
Nor ceases till the watchman's bawling
voice

Warns the gay groupe to part, with friend-
ly show,

Each to her patient, long-expecting spouse.

Somnus now captive takes the sense of
man

And leads the thoughts a wild eccentric
round.

Vulcan, in dreams, grins o'er his flowing
pot,

And sees the chalky register rubb'd off,
A long, long list of pots, and pints, and
gills,

And a clear reckoning made. The hun-
gry wretch,

Who, waking, gladly would have gnaw'd
a bone,

Now riots midst variety of meats,
And culls each dish for tender bits, to
please

His dainty appetite. The needy rogue,
Who during day skulked thro' back-streets
and lanes,

C C